



WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Office of Economic Advisors

FOR WESTERN WISCONSIN COUNTIES

BUFFALO, CRAWFORD, JACKSON, JUNEAU, LA CROSSE, MONROE, TREMPLEAU, & VERNON

May 2005

Seasonal job growth causes plummeting unemployment rates

All eight of the counties that make up Western Wisconsin reported declines in their April unemployment rates, as compared to the previous month. Leading the charge was Jackson, dropping 2.1 percent from March's 7.7 percent to a rate of 5.6 in April. All eight counties in Western Wisconsin experience seasonal fluctuations in their monthly unemployment rates. Jackson's seasonal fluctuations are especially pronounced because of the strength of the county's tourism, recreational services, and heavy construction industries. These three industries are especially dependant on weather and season.

Monroe County's April unemployment rate of 3.6 percent was down one full percent from March's rate of 4.6 percent. Monroe's April rate was the third lowest unemployment rate among Wisconsin's 72 counties, only Dane and Ozaukee had lower rates in April. Various business activities, some of it related to Fort McCoy and its important role in Monroe County's economy, were responsible for the county's low unemployment rate in April.

The La Crosse MSA's unadjusted April unemployment rate was 3.7 percent, dropping one percent from March's reading of 4.7 percent. In April, the La Crosse MSA had the second lowest unemployment among Wisconsin's 12 MSA's, only Madison, at 3.2 percent had a lower rate in April. Seasonal employment increases in the trade, construction, and leisure/hospitality industries assisted in pushing down April unemployment rates in the La Crosse MSA.

All but one of the state's 72 counties posted a lower unemployment

rate in April as the State of Wisconsin rate, not seasonally adjusted, dropped 0.8 percentage points to 4.7 percent. Seasonally adjusted the state rate in April was 4.5 percent.

Nationally, the number of workers involved in mass layoffs rose in April to a seasonally adjusted 136,837, up 5,989 from 130,848 workers who filed state unemployment insurance claims as a result of mass layoffs in March, according to figures released by the US Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Nonfarm employers initiated

Statistics (BLS) produces monthly industry employment level estimates for La Crosse County Wisconsin separate from Houston County Minnesota. Official monthly employment-by-industry estimates are only computed for these two counties combined (the federal definition of the La Crosse MSA). This publication will continue to provide unofficial monthly employment-by-industry estimates for La Crosse County based on imputed averages. In this publication, where a data set is labeled "La Crosse MSA" the data is for the two counties taken together. Where a data set is labeled "La Crosse County", said data is for La Crosse County only.

Labor Force Estimates (Unadjusted)			
	La Crosse * MSA	Wisconsin (000s)	United States (000s)
Current month: April 2005			
Civilian Labor Force	73,700	3,032.6	148,274
Employment	70,900	2,888.9	140,939
Unemployment	2,700	143.6	7,335
Unemployment rate	3.7%	4.7%	4.9%
Change from one month ago			
Civilian Labor Force	100	5.3	529
Employment	900	26.7	1,180
Unemployment	-1,000	-21.4	(651)
Unemployment rate	-1.3%	-0.8%	-0.5%
Change from one year ago			
Civilian Labor Force	400	-13.4	2,014
Employment	700	0.9	2,516
Unemployment	-400	-14.5	(502)
Unemployment rate	-0.5%	-0.5%	-0.5%

Note: All estimates are preliminary and based on place of residence.

* La Crosse MSA Statistics include Houston County Minnesota

1,274 mass layoffs last month, an increase of 80 from March, when there were 1,194 such events. In April, manufacturing firms accounted for 395 events and 63,121 related UI claimants. Both figures were higher than a year earlier, when there were 360 manufacturing layoffs and 43,158 related UI claimants.

Reminder: Officially, neither the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) nor the US Bureau of Labor

Note: As of January 2005, seasonally adjusted unemployment data is no longer available for sub-state (MSA) levels. State-wide and National unemployment rates continue to be available on both a seasonal and a non-seasonal (unadjusted) basis.

Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Area

April 2005	Buffalo	Crawford	Jackson	Juneau	Lacrosse	Monroe	Trempealeau	Vernon	Region	Non MSA*	Wisconsin
Civilian Labor Force**	7,990	9,180	9,820	12,760	62,370	26,510	16,240	14,850	159,720	97,350	3,032,590
Employed	7,630	8,690	9,270	11,960	60,040	25,560	15,540	14,240	152,920	92,890	2,888,940
Unemployed	360	500	550	790	2,330	950	700	620	6,790	4,460	143,650
Unemployment Rate	4.4%	5.4%	5.6%	6.2%	3.7%	3.6%	4.3%	4.2%	4.3%	4.6%	4.7%
Total Nonfarm (NFWS) ***	5,100	8,000	8,600	8,900	68,500	19,000	13,700	8,900	140,700	72,200	2,810,300
Total Private	4,200	6,900	5,800	6,600	58,500	14,700	11,500	6,900	115,100	56,600	2,387,700
Goods Producing	400	2,100	1,800	2,200	11,200	4,200	5,900	900	28,800	17,500	629,700
Service Producing	4,700	6,000	6,800	6,700	57,300	14,800	7,800	7,900	111,900	54,600	2,180,600
Constr., Mining & Nat.Rsrcs	130	210	890	280	2,600	580	330	240	5,300	2,600	130,300
Manufacturing	200	1,900	900	2,000	8,600	3,600	5,600	700	23,500	14,900	499,400
Trade	400	1,900	1,000	1,100	11,400	2,600	1,500	1,800	21,600	10,300	427,300
Transportation & Utilities	2,000	200	800	300	2,100	1,700	600	300	8,100	5,900	108,300
Financial Activities	170	160	240	200	3,000	510	450	380	5,100	2,100	157,700
Education and Health Services	600	1,200	800	1,200	13,400	2,100	1,300	2,200	22,700	9,400	382,900
Leisure & Hospitality	300	800	800	700	6,700	1,600	700	700	12,300	5,600	246,800
Info., Prof. & Bus. Svcs, Other Svcs	300	600	400	700	10,700	2,000	1,100	700	16,500	5,800	435,000
Total Government	930	1,140	2,770	2,370	9,990	4,260	2,150	1,950	25,600	15,600	422,600
Federal	140	70	50	250	450	2,010	120	120	3,200	2,750	29,200
State	20	210	450	790	2,610	250	30	30	4,380	1,770	104,800
Local	770	870	2,280	1,330	6,930	2,000	2,000	1,800	17,980	11,050	288,600
Change from one month ago	March 2005										
Civilian Labor Force**	80	-40	150	20	300	150	-10	20	600	400	5,300
Employed	160	80	350	180	800	390	240	220	2,400	1,600	26,700
Unemployed	-80	-120	-200	-160	-600	-240	-250	-200	-1,800	-1,200	-21,400
Unemployment rate(%)	-1.1	-1.3	-2.1	-1.3	-1.0	-0.9	-1.5	-1.3	-1.1	-1.3	-0.8
Total Nonfarm (NFWS) ***	100	100	340	200	900	230	270	180	2,400	1,400	34,200
Percent change NFWS from last mon	2.1%	1.3%	4.1%	2.3%	1.4%	1.2%	2.0%	2.0%	1.7%	2.0%	1.2%
Total Private	80	110	300	200	1,000	300	270	140	2,500	1,400	33,600
Goods Producing	20	40	200	0	300	100	110	40	800	500	10,300
Service Producing	90	70	100	200	700	200	170	140	1,500	900	23,900
Constr., Mining & Nat.Rsrcs	10	30	250	40	200	80	80	40	700	500	11,800
Manufacturing	10	10	0	0	100	-20	30	0	100	0	-1,500
Trade	10	20	100	0	400	50	40	50	600	300	5,300
Transportation & Utilities	0	0	0	10	0	30	10	10	100	100	2,300
Financial Activities	0	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	300
Education and Health Services	20	0	0	0	0	10	10	0	0	0	-1,100
Leisure & Hospitality	20	60	30	100	200	140	80	30	600	400	10,200
Svcs	10	-20	10	10	100	20	10	20	200	100	6,300
Total Government	20	0	0	20	-90	-70	10	40	-100	0	600
Federal	10	0	0	0	0	-30	10	10	0	0	100
State	0	0	10	-10	0	0	0	0	0	0	700
Local	10	-10	-10	40	-90	-40	0	30	-100	0	-200
Change from one year ago	April 2004										
Civilian Labor Force**	60	260	-40	-30	400	-240	630	390	1,400	1,000	-13,400
Employed	70	280	-40	10	500	-230	700	470	1,800	1,300	1,000
Unemployed	-20	-20	10	-50	-100	-10	-70	-80	-400	-200	-14,400
Unemployment rate(%)	-0.3	-0.4	0.1	-0.4	-0.3	0.0	-0.6	-0.6	-0.2	-0.3	-0.5
Total Nonfarm (NFWS) ***	80	320	70	-120	1,300	80	720	280	2,700	1,400	26,600
Percent change NFWS from last year	1.7%	4.1%	0.8%	-1.3%	1.9%	0.4%	5.6%	3.2%	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%
Total Private	90	300	200	-100	1,000	200	700	200	2,700	1,600	26,700
Goods Producing	0	170	100	-200	-300	200	500	0	400	700	6,500
Service Producing	80	150	0	0	1,600	-100	200	300	2,300	700	20,100
Constr., Mining & Nat.Rsrcs	10	10	50	10	100	30	30	10	200	100	4,400
Manufacturing	0	160	0	-200	-400	160	460	-30	200	600	2,100
Trade	-10	70	100	0	700	0	30	80	900	200	3,800
Transportation & Utilities	50	10	0	20	0	130	30	10	300	300	2,400
Financial Activities	10	0	0	-10	0	-20	30	10	0	0	100
Education and Health Services	40	30	0	0	500	100	70	140	900	500	8,100
Leisure & Hospitality	-10	30	0	0	0	-50	40	10	0	0	4,200
Svcs	10	0	0	0	200	-140	10	0	100	-100	1,600
Total Government	0	20	-90	-40	270	-140	30	40	100	-200	-100
Federal	0	0	0	-20	-90	-60	-10	10	-200	-100	-300
State	10	10	10	70	270	10	0	0	400	100	1,300
Local	-10	10	-90	-90	90	-80	30	30	-100	-200	-1,100

• Seven counties, excluding La Crosse County

** Includes participants residing in area.

*** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates above are NOT seasonally adjusted.

Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. NFWS data benchmarked to 3/2004